

## Message Text

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45

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SNM-02 AID-20 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 EB-11 IGA-02 DPW-01 NIC-01

DRC-01 COME-00 AGR-20 TRSE-00 OMB-01 CIEP-02 SY-10

USSS-00 FBO-01 CU-04 /201 W  
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R 091211Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

N/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 4572

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

VIENTIANE 6504

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN

DIA

DEA HQS

CINCPAC

USSAG NKP

13TH ADVON UDORN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 17558

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TH

SUBJECT: ATMOSPHERICS IN BANGKOK, NOVEMBER 3-9

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REF: BNGKOK 17154

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SUMMARY: THE SANYA GOVERNMENT IS CAREFULLY BUILDING ITS PUBLIC SUPPORT. THE PRIME MINISTER, THE COMMERCE MINISTER AND DEPUTY MINISTER, AND THE AGRICULTURAL MINISTER UNPRECEDNTEDLY APPEARED ON NATIONWIDE TELEVISION TO DISCUSS THE ECONOMIC SITUATION. THE CONSTITUTIONAL DRAFTING COMMITTEE IS ALSO PUBLICLY SOLICITING SUGGESTIONS AND ANNOUNCING ITS PROGRESS. EMOTIONS CONTINUE TO RUN HIGH AGAINST THE EXILED TIO AND THE EMBASSY RECEIVED A SMALL DELEGATION PROTESTING THE PRESENCE OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER THANOM KITTIKACHORN IN THE UNITED STATES. POPULAR RESENTMENT AGAINST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS INTERMITTENTLY FLARES AND ONE GOVERNOR HAS ASKED FOR A TRANSFER BECAUSE OF STUDENT PRESSURES. THE PRESS IS GIVING WIDE COVERAGE TO DIFFERENCES AMONG THE LEADERSHIP OF THE NATIONAL STUDENT CENTER OF THAILAND. THESE DIFFERENCES APPEAR TO BE BASED IN DISAGREEMENTS OVER DEGREES OF ACTIVISM NOT VERGING ON RADICALISM, AND SHOULD NOT BE A SOURCE OF STUDENT UNREST IN THE SHORT RUN. THE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE TO ATTEND TO CHALLENGES ON THE ECONOMICFRONT AND FROM THE COMMUNIST INSURGENCY. END SUMMARY.

1. PRIME MINISTER SANYA THAMMASAK HAS TAKEN UNPRECEDENTED STEPS TO INFORM THE PUBLIC OF HIS POLICIES. PREEMPTING PRIME TELEVISION HOURS, SANYA, THE COMMERCE MINISTER AND DEPUTY MINISTER, AND THE AGRICULTURAL MINISTER REVIEWED THE ECONOMIC SITUATION NOVEMBER 2. THE PRESENTATIONS WERE INFORMATIVE AND COMPETENT, AND GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS ACTIVELY ATTACKING BASIC ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. SANYA HAS ANNOUNCED THAT FURTHER TELEVISION DISCUSSIONS OF GOVERNMENT POLICIESWILL BE FORTHCOMING. SANYA'S POLICY OF -GOING PUBLIC"SHARPLY CONTRASTS WITH THE POSTURE OF THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT AND IS A DELIBERATE MOVE TO CREATE A POWER BASE AMONG AN INFORMED PUBLIC.

2.THE CONSTITUTION DRAFTING COMMITTEE (CDC) PERIODICALLY ANNOUNCES THE PROGRESS IT HAS MADE. THE GOVERNMENT HAS INVITED THE PUBLIC TO CONTRIBUTE SUGGESTIONS AND THE CDC HAS ESTABLISHED A SUB-COMMITTEE TO DEAL WITH THE PUBLIC. IN LINE WITH COMMITTING THE PUBLIC TO THE GOVERNMENT AND THE NEW CONSTITUTION, A CDC MEMBER TOLD US THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION MAY BE SUBMITTED TO POPULAR REFERENDUM.  
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3. EMOTIONS CONTINUE TO RUN HIGH AGAINST THE EXILED TRIO. TWO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE "POST GRADUATE GROUP" VISITED THE AMERICAN THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA EMBASSIES NOVEMBER 5 TO DELIVER LETTERS PROTESTING THE PRESENCE OF THE FORMER LEADERS IN OUR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES. (BKK 17308, 17242). PRESS TREATMENT OF THE VISIT WAS MODERATE, BUT THE BROADER ISSUE HAS GENERATED COMMENT CRITICAL OF THE UNITED STATES SINCE

MANY THAI BELIEVE THAT AMERICAN INTERESTS ARE TIED TO THE EXILED LEADERS. AN UNPLEASANT ASPECT OF THIS EMOTIONAL PROBLEM WAS THE RECENT SPRAY PAINTING OF SLOGANS ON THE RESIDENCE'S GATES (BKK 17430).

4. POPULAR DISCONTENT WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAS ALSO ASSERTED ITSELF IN THE PROVINCES. STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST THE GOVERNOR OF ANGTHONG PROVINCE RESULTED IN THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR GRANTING HIS REQUEST FOR A TRANSFER TO BNGKOK. BECAUSE OF AN UNTIMELY DEATH, COURT LITIGATIONS, AND THE ANGTHONG GOVERNOR'S TRANSFER, THERE ARE THREE VACANT GOVERNORSHIPS. THE SANYA GOVERNMENT, THEREFORE, WILL HAVE A CHANCE TO DEMONSTRATE ITS METTLE IN SELECTING GOVERNORS.

5. LONG STANDING DIFFERENCES IN THE NATIONAL STUDENT CENTER OF THAILAND (NSCT) HAVE RECENTLY BROKEN TO SURFACE WITH THE RESIGNATION OF THE MORE ACTIVIST SEKSAN PRASERTKUL FROM HIS APPOINTED POSITIONS IN THE MSCT (BANGKOK 17557). THE CONSERVATIVE NSCT APPEARS RELUCTANT TO TAKE A STRONG POLITICAL ROLE, BUT HAS LAID PLANS TO TRAIN STUDENTS TO EXPLAIN TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC ITS RESPONSIBILITIES IN A REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT. SEKSAN'S FREE THAMMASAT GROUP HAS ALSO SAID ITS AIMS ARE EDUCATIONAL. SEKSAN, HOWEVER, IS PUBLICLY SKEPTICAL THAT REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT CAN SURVIVE WHEN THE POWERFUL BUREAUCRACIES HAVE NOT BEEN CHECKED. IT IS TOO EARLY TO TELL WHAT EFFECT THESE SPLITS WILL HAVE ON STUDENT AND POPULAR SUPPORT FOR THE SANYA GOVERNMENT.

6. RELATED TO THE PROBLEM OF DOMESTIC INFLATION IS THE SHORTFALL IN GOVERNMENT REVENUE. THE SHORTFALL HAS INHIBITED WORK ON INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS AND INCREASED THE BURDEN OF DEBT SAVING. COUNTERBALANCING THOSE PROBLEMS, THAILAND'S EXPORT EARNINGS ARE UP 40 PERCENT OVER LAST YEAR AND GOVERNMENT REVENUES ARE INCREASING AS THE ECONOMY CONTINUES TO EXPAND. NEVERTHELESS, THE SANYA GOVERNMENT'S CONTINUING SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC PROBLEM, WHICH MAY MOVE THE GENERALLY CONSERVATIVE CABINET MEMBERS TO BROADEN SOME ECONOMIC CONTROLS, IS THE PERSISTING EVIDENCE OF INFLATIONARY PRESSURE (BKK 17194).

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7. THE MANAGER OF THE BANK OF THAILAND TOLD US HE BELIEVED THERE HAD BEEN A SUBSTANTIAL OUTFLOW OF CAPITAL. HE ATTRIBUTED THIS MAINLY TO WITHDRAWAL OF FUNDS FOR THE EXILED LEADERS AND ALSO POSSIBLE BUSINESSMEN'S CONCERNS ABOUT SHORT TERM ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROSPECTS IN THAILAND. HE IS ALSO ON THE COMMITTEE INVESTIGATING THE ASSETS OF THE EXILED LEADERS AND SAID THAT THEY HAD AROUND \$5 MILLION STASHED IN VARIOUS BANKS. TO HIS MIND SUCH A LARGE AMOUNT INDICATED THAT THE TRIO HAD NO IDEA THEY WOULD BE LEAVING THAILAND SO PRECIPITOUSLY (BKK 17547).

8. LT. GEN. KRIANGSAK THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF OF  
THE SUPREME COMMAND, COMMENTED TO US THAT SINCE THE CHANGE IN  
GOVERNMENT HE HAS A FREER HAND IN MAKI  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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